For Immediate Release
May 15, 2002

Media Contact: Denise Horstman, (216) 707-2262)
dhorstman@clevelandart.org

Blind Man's Buff, Rare Sculpture by Modern Master Louise Bourgeois, Acquired for Contemporary Collection

CLEVELAND — A rare 1984 marble sculpture by 91-year-old American artist Louise Bourgeois, *Blind Man's Buff*, was purchased yesterday evening at auction by the Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA), announced CMA director Katharine Lee Reid today. The $1.3 million price is a record for a work by Bourgeois (born Paris, 1911). It is expected to go on view at CMA June 18.

Commenting on the purchase, Reid said: "Jeffrey Grove, our curator of contemporary art, and I have both agreed for some time that Louise Bourgeois is a high priority for our collection. This is a most important and appropriate acquisition for the Cleveland Museum of Art."

Added Grove: "*Blind Man's Buff* powerfully blends the themes and images that have infused Bourgeois' work since the 1940s, including mythical, sexual, and bodily metaphors. Beautifully carved, provocative, and dramatic, it is one of the most successful of several sculptures she made in the 1970s and 1980s incorporating her signature forms. This work, which measures 36-1/2 x 35 x 25 inches, is modeled from an exquisite piece of marble that gradates from tones of pale blue to a rich, light umber and resonates with a rich history of sculpture, from Michelangelo to Rodin."

Bourgeois is considered one of today's most influential artists. Her work is shown internationally in major exhibitions, and this summer, new installations by the artist will be featured at *Documenta* 11 in Kassel, Germany. *Documenta* is considered the world's most relevant exhibition of contemporary art. Bourgeois kept *Blind Man's Buff* to herself for many years, including it in all of her major retrospectives before releasing it to a private collector in 1997. CMA purchased the work through Christie's in New York.

The acquisition is especially timely for Clevelanders: An exhibition of three giant bronze spiders by Bourgeois (one 30 feet high) is planned for Cleveland's Star Plaza in Playhouse Square for approximately four months beginning this June. Hosted by Cleveland Public Art and the Cleveland Theater District, this exhibition was recently installed in New York's Rockefeller Center. CMA will

be a sponsor of this event, which encourages viewers to walk through the spiders' legs and sit beneath the canopies they create.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive art museums. Its permanent collection, built on the strength of the museum's curators, is world renowned for its quality and breadth spanning 5,000 years. The museum is a key international player in exhibitions, scholarship, and art acquisitions. For more information on the CMA and its events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.clevelandart.org.

# # #

Editors please note: A digital image is available.